



NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY
WESTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

UPDATE: PROJECT CEASEFIRE
INDEPENDENCE, KC DEFENDANTS PLEAD GUILTY
TO ILLEGAL POSSESSION OF FIREARMS

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – Todd P. Graves, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced that two defendants pleaded guilty in federal court today, in separate and unrelated cases, to illegal possession of firearms. Today's convictions, Graves said, mark additional progress under Project Ceasefire, the district's ongoing anti-crime initiative.

* **Tyrone B. Spencer**, 25, of Kansas City, pleaded guilty before U.S. District Judge Ortrie D. Smith this morning to being a felon in possession of a firearm.

By pleading guilty, **Spencer** admitted that he was in possession of a Glock .40-caliber semi-automatic pistol and a Glock .45-caliber semi-automatic pistol on Nov. 25, 2003. Under federal law, Graves explained, it is illegal for any felon to be in possession of any firearm or ammunition. **Spencer** has a 2001 criminal felony conviction for possession with intent to sell narcotics and two 1999 criminal felony convictions for sale of a controlled substance and tampering.

Spencer was originally charged with being a felon in possession of a firearm in an indictment returned by a federal grand jury on Feb. 26, 2004, in Kansas City.

This case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney David A. Barnes. It was investigated by the Kansas City, Mo., Police Department and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

* **David P. Birk**, 27, of Independence, Mo., pleaded guilty before U.S. District Judge Ortrie D. Smith this morning to being an unlawful user of a controlled substance in possession of a firearm.

By pleading guilty, **Birk** admitted that he was in possession of a Raven Arms .25-caliber semi-automatic pistol on March 2, 2004. Under federal law, Graves explained, it is illegal for any unlawful user or addict of a controlled substance to be in possession of any firearm or ammunition. At the time he possessed the firearm, the indictment alleges, **Birk** was an unlawful user or addict of methamphetamine.

Birk was originally charged with being a felon in possession of a firearm in an indictment returned by a federal grand jury on April 6, 2004, in Kansas City.

This case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney David A. Barnes. It was investigated by the Independence, Mo., Police Department and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

Project Ceasefire

Project Ceasefire, launched in October 1999, is a cooperative initiative by federal and local law enforcement and the Kansas City Crime Commission that targets for federal prosecution persons who unlawfully use or possess firearms.

This news release, as well as additional information about the office of the United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, is available on-line at

www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow